



## An Interview with

# Bantz J. Craddock



**General Bantz J. Craddock, USA, is Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and Commander, U.S. European Command.**

**JFQ:** *What do you see as the greatest challenges facing U.S. European Command?*

**General Craddock:** There are numerous challenges. I would not want to rank order them because then it looks like we put some of them at the forefront—but the others at the end of the list are just as important. As in other parts of the world, a major challenge is identifying the threats we face. The nature of security, if you will, has changed. In the past, particularly at EUCOM, there was a very clear mission set, which was defense of the trans-Atlantic alliance: NATO versus the Warsaw Pact. Those days are over, obviously, and now there is discussion and debate about defense versus security. NATO has transitioned from a defensive alliance to a security-focused alliance. Obviously, EUCOM has to be an important part of that. I don't know if that's a rank order of number one, but it's pretty high on the challenge list.

Beyond this challenge lie the nonstate actors and myriad *asymmetrical* threats, which is probably an overused term, but it's a true term nonetheless. Lines of communication, whether they be sea lines or

cyber lines, are also important. And then the generation of resources to sustain extremist movements—by that I mean the trafficking of drugs, illicit activities, organized crime that will generate resources for those extremist activities that use terrorist techniques. There are also unique threats, such as those found in Africa, such as famine, disease, and natural disasters, whether floods, mudslides, earthquakes, things of that nature. Of course, there is a terrorist threat in Africa as well.

Also, the nature of many of the threats that we face today requires us to work closely and in coordination with other government agencies, such as the State Department, USAID [U.S. Agency for International Development], Health and Human Services, and the Department of Energy.

**JFQ:** *What makes EUCOM different from other combatant commands, and how has it changed since the last time you were in Europe?*

**General Craddock:** On a physical basis, it's the only one that's actually headquartered OCONUS [outside the continental United States]. The other commands are either forward-deployed, forward headquarters, or in the continental United States. It's probably nuanced, there probably doesn't appear to be much of a difference, but there's a consideration of host-nation laws, regulations, and agreements that always play into that.

What's changed? I was last here in 2002, and the very nature of the debate over defense versus security has changed, the nature of the expansion of the EUCOM missions that are associated with that mindset, which is collective security. The change is thinking about assistance to cooperation. *Security assistance* is an outdated term. I understood this when I was down in SOUTHCOM [U.S. Southern Command], and I think that security cooperation, building partner-nation capability, is now more important than ever. The other difference is that whereas, in the past, to a greater extent, the component commands to EUCOM focused on providing capabilities in the EUCOM AOR [area of responsibility], now those capabilities are provided worldwide. So I think that also becomes a significant difference from years past.

**JFQ:** *Could you please tell us about EUCOM's new theater strategy?*

**General Craddock:** It's not yet approved. We're working through it, we're close to being final, but it's got to go through a few more wickets. I'm very encouraged. The focus is what we call active security, which is not about fighting wars. Instead, the focus is on creating conditions that enhance and encourage stable environments. It's partnering, it's building capability, and it's encouraging our partners for defense reform in those sectors, good governance, and the notion of representative governance.

The key is that the strategy acknowledges equities by the Department of Defense and by European Command, but it builds upon an understanding and a dependence on the interagency community, the other government agencies and departments that have to partner not only with us, but also with each other. This is a collective effort to create success in those types of ventures. The intent is to describe an endstate and then put together a plan that positions us strategically. This plan should

**On January 19, 2007, Col David H. Gurney, USMC (Ret.), and Dr. Jeffrey D. Smotherman of Joint Force Quarterly interviewed General Craddock at his Pentagon liaison office.**

allow us to work together and then to build partner-nation capability and to build good governance where it may not be, to the extent that, one, they're satisfied with it, or two, that it fits into a regional cooperative effort.

**JFQ:** *There has been a lot of discussion about the possible formation of a new unified command for Africa. Does this reflect the view that Africa has become more important, and if so, how?*

**General Craddock:** The conventional wisdom, the common view out there, at least in the government, is that Africa is increasingly to the forefront in our national security interests. There is enormous potential in Africa, and there are significant challenges and problems: political instability, ungoverned or uncontrolled spaces, socioeconomic issues, extremism in its various forms, the age-old smuggling, illicit trafficking, piracy, and then, of course, devastating endemic disease there, HIV/AIDS among those, which has come to the forefront in recent years. So those are challenges and issues that, maybe in days past, did not appear to be significant.

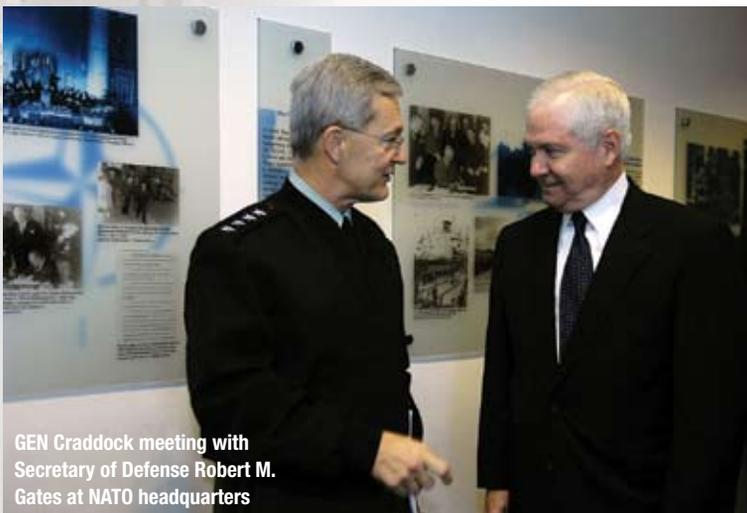
With the recognition of a more globally connected world, I think a greater understanding of humanitarian issues has come about that allows developing nations to chart their own courses better. These nations can do so not only from a security perspective but also from a governance and social focus. Combining all these perspectives should push Africa to the front in terms of competing for resources and attention from the U.S. Government. So that's part of the thinking, that there is indeed a renewed emphasis and focus on what is happening in Africa.

**JFQ:** *NATO's policy is that Afghanistan is its number-one priority. Do you believe the Alliance is following through?*

**General Craddock:** Yes, I do believe NATO is answering the call in Afghanistan. Many of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams are manned and operated by NATO member nations. The Alliance has some 32,000 forces

in Afghanistan across the country, providing security and stability on a daily basis. NATO forces work closely with the Afghan government and local leaders to assist in developing infrastructure, civil and social services needed by the Afghan people. I believe there is recognition that there is not a military solution to correct what ails Afghanistan. The solutions are development, construction, and reconstruction. The security that NATO forces bring to Afghanistan helps to set the conditions to permit the "solution set" to get started.

Over the past few years there's been an expansion of their authority, an expansion of contributing nations, an expansion of capability, and all that has contributed to an enhanced security condition in much of the country, a sustained security condition in others, and also improved reconstruction and development in parts of the country where the security condition permits that. So there has been a significant military contribution. The political leadership continues to work to maintain adequate troop strength and to convince nations



GEN Craddock meeting with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates at NATO headquarters

DOD (Cherie A. Thurlby)

to eliminate shortfalls through increased contributions. The last thing is to reduce the constraints on the ability of the commander to accomplish the mission—mainly, to reduce caveats on how NATO troops can participate, or where they can participate in the theater.

**JFQ:** *In our last issue, General Lance Smith [USAF] of U.S. Joint Forces Command spoke about NATO transformation. What is your take on NATO transformation and expansion? Is the Alliance meeting its own expectations?*

**General Craddock:** The Alliance is moving forward in transformation and

meeting expectations. Generally I would say that's the case, but obviously there are niche areas that would be farther ahead or judged or assessed as being more transformational than others. First of all is the notion of a collective defense, an alliance for collective defense, versus today's alliance for collective security. That's a fundamental shift in concept. There is now a more comprehensive view of security issues and the capabilities that flow from that view anywhere in the world. There have been a lot of transformational efforts, and it's more than just platforms or systems. The transformation is in how we think about things and how we think about capabilities that will be needed and how then to best develop, either collectively or individually, capabilities to satisfy what we project as the needs of the future.

Now, the platforms issue and the hardware are important; NATO is working now on some enhancements in strategic lift and doing a collective effort there. I think there are 15 nations now that are consorting to buy some

strategic lift. The intelligence fusion cell was recently stood up, which is a transformational effort in intelligence, and now that has a NATO look to it. It was a first. I think it was October 2006 when it reached initial operational capability. And that uniquely facilitates collection and distribution of military intelligence, which is essential for NATO operations.

One of the recent transformational initiatives has been the establishing of a NATO SOF [special operations force] capability to strengthen

the Alliance's out-of-area crisis prevention and rapid deployment. So partnering with EUCOM or working also with the Special [Operations] Command to see how we might structure this into a coordination center to build a special operations capability throughout the Alliance is important. That's one that has significant potential for the future.

Probably the most transformational aspect or program that has been started recently was the NATO Response Force, which reached full operational capability in November 2006 just after the Riga NATO summit. It's a significant achievement. In the NATO Response Force, there are about 25,000

NATO soldiers—land, air, and sea—that are postured, trained, and certified to respond to a specific set of missions should NATO call.

**JFQ:** *The ongoing EUCOM transformation plans call for a significant reduction in the footprint of forward-stationed forces, but some are criticizing them for cutting too deep. In fact, General Jones [General James L. Jones, USMC (Ret.)] spoke of this on C-SPAN in December concerning the Army component. Are you reassessing the transformation effort?*

**General Craddock:** It's healthy and helpful to reassess all plans routinely. I have seen extraordinarily capable, talented planners put together sensational plans in just about any functional area imaginable. What then occurs is implementation, and the plan moves out—and often, the plan may not survive first contact with whoever will criticize, or derail, or oppose it, whether it's a wartime or peacetime situation.

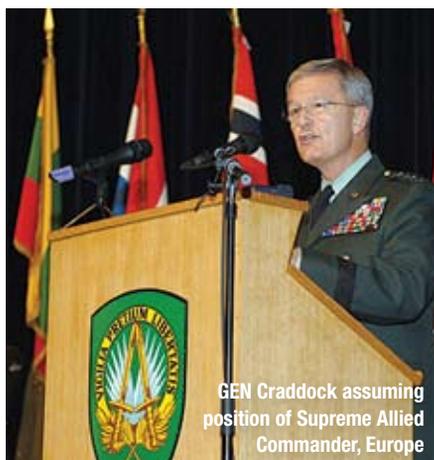
Secondly, the fact is that things change, conditions change, and probably more so now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than ever before for a variety of reasons. If we compound these situations, the opportunity for plans as constructed to survive over time is diminished significantly. It's healthy, it's essential, and it's an obligation that we routinely go back and look at the assumptions made for the plans and challenge those assumptions—Do they still fit in the current situation, the current condition?—and then review what it is that we've chartered, what it is that we've been doing, to see if it still makes sense, if it is still effective and efficient.

So that's a long answer—the answer being “yes”—to a short question. I'm going to review, continually reassess, and look at external conditions as well as internal opportunities. I know there are discussions that the Army may grow in size; some requests have been made. If that's the case, there may be opportunities to grow the Army, to have that growth reside in the EUCOM AOR. But there has to be a reason for it, and that's what we'll look at—we'll look at the conditions and problem set that we face. There is value in forward-deployed forces. There is enormous value in security cooperation opportunities that build this partner-nation capability. It is very effective to use our forces to partner with, exercise with, and train with other nations so that their capacities can be enhanced. It is efficient when we have the same forces available

because we build habitual relationships. And if we have a paucity or we've diminished the availability of those habitual forces, we ought to look at that and make some assessments and decide whether or not we have what we need to do that in a manner that is, one, most efficient (I'm a taxpayer, so I don't want to waste one dollar, just like anybody else) and, second, most effective in terms of building needed capacities so that others can partner with us in any future venture that might call for either the Alliance or a coalition of some other means.

**JFQ:** *If formed, will an Africa Command disrupt the strategy?*

**General Craddock:** No, I don't think so. The active security that we're talking about is designed so that it could be extracted, it could be pulled out of the EUCOM strategy document, and the rest is still valid. It's not a house of cards where if one card is pulled, then the rest are going to fall. It's a pretty



GEN Craddock assuming position of Supreme Allied Commander, Europe

thoughtful document; I was very impressed with the presentations I've received from the group. They've done some good thinking on this, both from theoretical and practical aspects. If an Africa Command becomes authorized, sourced, and stood up, we merely have to take the strategy document that we've got working down at EUCOM, do some cut-and-paste, and then buff up the edges. I think it will work fine. **JFQ**

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